

Message Text

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43

ACTION SCA-01

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 PPTE-00 VOE-00 SCSE-00 MMO-04

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FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 821

UNCLAS BRIDGETOWN 0942

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: CGEN

SUBJECT: CONSULAR PACKAGE FY-1978

REF: STATE 123202

1. AS EXPLAINED IN THE "GENERAL REMARKS" SECTION OF THE CONSULAR PACKAGE (PAGES 1 AND 2) SUBMITTED BY OUR OM OF MAY 6, EMBASSY EXPERIENCES GREAT DIFFICULTY IN PROCESSING REQUESTS FROM OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF CASES. IN ALMOST ALL CASES, INITIAL LETTERS ASKING BENEFICIARIES TO COMPLETE FORMS OR GOVERNMENTS-ALL TEN OF THEM - TO RESPOND TO REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE OR DOCUMENTATION HAVE TO BE REPEATED AT LEAST ONCE AND SOMETIMES MORE OFTEN. SOME CASES CANNOT BE FULLY DEVELOPED UNTIL ONE OF THE "CIRCUIT RIDING" CONSULAR OFFICERS PROCEEDS TO THE OTHER ISLANDS AND EITHER PERSONALLY INTERVIEWS BENEFICIARIES OR CONTACTS LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. VISITS BY CONSULAR OFFICERS QUITE OFTEN INVOLVE TRACKING DOWN BENEFICIARIES IN UNDERDEVELOPED MOUNTAIN AND COUNTRY AREAS WHICH ARE NOT SERVICED BY ROADS. THESE SITUATIONS IMPOSE BURDENS ON THIS POST WHICH ARE PROBABLY NOT EXPERIENCED BY ANY OTHER POST IN THE SERVICE. AS A RESULT, EACH REQUEST FOR DEVELOPMENT CANNOT BE COUNTED AS A SINGLE CASE, GIVEN INORDINATE AMOUNT OF CORRESPONDENCE, TIME AND ENERGY SPENT TO COMPLETE MOST CASES. EVEN THE ANNUAL SOCIAL SECURITY AND VETERANS ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONNAIRE PROGRAMS WHICH INVOLVED APPROXIMATELY 1200 PERSONS THIS YEAR, RESULTED IN THE RETURN OF A VERY HIGH PERCENTAGE OF QUESTIONNAIRES FOR COMPLETION, SOME AS OFTEN AS THREE TIMES, BEFORE THEY COULD BE ACCEPTED AND

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TRANSMITTED TO SSA OR VA.

2. FINALLY, THERE HAS BEEN A SHARP INCREASE RECENTLY IN THE
NUMBER OF FEDERAL AGENCY CASES PROCESSED, PRESUMABLY BECAUSE
MORE OLDER PERSONS ARE NOW RETURNING TO THESE ISLANDS TO RETIRE
ON THE BENEFITS RECEIVED FROM THEIR WORK IN THE US AND WE
ARE RECEIVING MANY MORE "FOLLOW-UP" REQUESTS THAN BEFORE SINCE
WE ARE UNABLE TO DEVELOP CASES AS QUICKLY AS THE AGENCIES WOULD
LIKE.

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